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CALIFORNIA STATE THREAT ASSESSMENT CENTER

24-HOUR REPORT**21 MARCH 2019**

(U) CALIFORNIA**(U) Los Angeles – Three People Injured in Explosion at Illicit Canoga Park Drug Lab**

(U) Three people were injured Wednesday in an explosion at a Canoga Park commercial building that authorities said was being used as an illicit drug lab. Firefighters responded to reports of an explosion on 20 March and found that three units had been damaged, and part of the building's roof had collapsed. According to a spokeswoman for the Los Angeles Police Department, the building housed an illegal narcotics laboratory producing cannabis oil, two people were taken to a hospital — one in critical condition and the other in serious condition.

SOURCE: 20 March 2019, [Los Angeles Times](#)

(U) Oxnard – Four Men, One Teen Arrested for Attempted Murder, Gang-Related Offenses

(U) Ventura County Sheriff's Office Gang Unit along with the Oxnard Police Department arrested four men and a teenager on offenses related to attempted murder and gang activity on 15 March. According to officials, the sheriff's office had been investigating several gang-related shootings over the last two months. On 15 and 17 March, the Ventura County Sheriff's Major Crime's Bureau and Oxnard Police Department executed search warrants at different locations in Oxnard. Three firearms, ammunition, as well as physical evidence of gang-affiliation were seized. The suspects face possible charges including attempted homicide, conspiracy to commit a crime, shooting into an occupied building, and a gun-related charge.

SOURCE: 20 March 2019, [KEYT 3](#)

(U) NATIONAL**(U) Pennsylvania – Authorities Seize \$18 Million Worth of Cocaine at Port of Philadelphia**

(U) Philadelphia – Law enforcement officials confiscated nearly 1,000 pounds of cocaine found in a shipping container worth about \$18 million at the Port of Philadelphia on 19 March. The ship the container was on was traveling from Colombia to Europe, and is believed to be the largest seizure of cocaine ever for the city. A US Customs & Border Protection official said that multiple agencies were involved in the seizure, but was not able to provide more information except that the case was turned over to the Department of Homeland Security.

SOURCE: 19 March 2019, [New York Daily News](#)

(U) Texas – 47 Arrested in Multi-State Drug Trafficking Sting

(U) Houston – Federal officers arrested dozens of people in a drug trafficking sting, named Operation Wrecking Ball. According to officials, cocaine and heroin were being distributed by six separate cells operating for Mexican cartels by Dominican nationals. During a press conference on 20 March, the US Attorney's Office Houston division said 47 of 56 defendants have been arrested, and more than \$3 million was seized. Investigators say drugs were smuggled into Texas from Colombia and Mexico, then distributed via Houston to Georgia, New York, Florida, Louisiana and Virginia.

SOURCE: 20 March 2019, [CBS 19](#)

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UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY**(U) INTERNATIONAL****(U) Italy – Bus Driver Takes 51 Children Hostage, Sets Fire to Vehicle**

(U) Milan – A bus driver in northern Italy abducted 51 children and their school chaperones on 20 March, threatening the hostages' lives for 40 minutes and then set fire to the bus. According to authorities, officers broke windows at the back of the bus to reach the passengers and got all of them out without serious injuries before flames destroyed the vehicle. The driver was apprehended and treated for burns. He told authorities he wanted to vindicate Europe-bound migrants who have died in the Mediterranean Sea but did not plan to hurt anyone. However, prosecutors said the suspect, identified as Ousseynou Sy, made preparations that indicate his actions were premeditated, such as buying a canister of gasoline and restraints a day prior.

SOURCE: 20 March 2019, [Associated Press](#)

(U) Kenya – Kenyan Police Seize \$20 Million in Counterfeit Bills

(U) Nairobi – According to the directorate of criminal investigations, Kenyan police have seized \$20 million of counterfeit banknotes that had been stored in a personal safety deposit box at a branch of Barclays Bank in Kenya. Police had also arrested six people, including two of the bank's staff in connection with the fake currency. The seizure comes at a time when lawmakers are pushing for implementation of amendments to banking laws that would relax the rigorous requirements for recording transactions above \$10,000. The central bank has said the changes could undermine efforts to tackle money laundering, financing of terrorism and proceeds from crime.

SOURCE: 19 March 2019, [Reuters](#)

(U) United Kingdom – UK Police Investigating Attacks on Five Mosques

(U) Birmingham – Police officers and counterterrorism officials in Britain were investigating attacks on five mosques Thursday, including one in which a man took a sledgehammer to smash the windows of a house of worship in Birmingham, England. After the authorities received reports overnight of the sledgehammer attack in north Birmingham, a similar episode was reported nearby, according to the West Midlands Police. Officers discovered damage to two other sites and received a further report later on Thursday morning, all from places of worship within a few miles of each other and in an area with a large Muslim community.

SOURCE: 21 March 2019, [New York Times](#)

(U) United Kingdom – Indian Jeweler Implicated in \$2 Billion Loan Fraud Arrested in London

(U) London – Fugitive billionaire jeweler Nirav Modi had been arrested by British police in London on behalf of Indian authorities. India had asked Britain in August to extradite Modi, one of the main suspects charged in a \$2 billion loan fraud case at state-run Punjab National Bank (PNB), the largest case of its kind for India. According to PNB, two jewelry groups headed by Modi and his uncle Mehul Choksi had defrauded it by raising credit from other Indian banks using illegal guarantees issued by rogue PNB staff.

SOURCE: 19 March 2019, [Al Jazeera](#)

(U) PREPARED BY THE CALIFORNIA STATE THREAT ASSESSMENT CENTER.

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